

## Message Text

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PAGE 01 USNATO 06144 01 OF 03 161611Z

ACTION ACDA-12

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 ACDE-00 CIAE-00 H-02 INR-10

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TO USDEL MBFR VIENNA IMMEDIATE

INFO SECSTATE WASHDC 2349

AMEMBASSY BONN

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 03 USNATO 06144

USICA

FOR FERNANDEZ FROM CLAUSSEN: STATE FOR ACDA:FISCHER

E.O. 11652: N/A

SUBJECT: "ATLANTIC NEWS" REPORT ON MBFR

FOLLOWING TEXT APPEARED IN "ATLANTIC NEWS" DATED 16 JUNE  
1978. BEGIN TEXT:

CHANCES OF "MBFR" AGREEMENT BETTER THAN THEY WERE 6 MONTHS  
AGO

(A.N.-N.A.) - THE U.S. DEFENSE SECRETARY, DR. HAROLD BROWN,  
STATED ON WEDNESDAY THAT THE NEW SOVIET "MBFR" PROPOSALS  
SHOW THAT THE SOVIET UNION IS SERIOUS REGARDING FORCE  
REDUCTIONS IN CENTRAL EUROPE. BUT, HE ADDED, THE PROPOSALS  
ARE NOT NECESSARILY ACCEPTABLE TO NATO COUNTRIES.

THE CHANCES OF AN AGREEMENT ARE HOWEVER BETTER THAN THEY  
WERE SIX MONTHS AGO, ADDED DR. BROWN.

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PAGE 02 USNATO 06144 01 OF 03 161611Z

THE NEW WARSAW PACT INITIATIVE, PRESENTED AT THE END OF  
LAST WEEK IN VIENNA, IS FAIRLY AMBIGUOUS FROM CERTAIN POINTS  
OF VIEW. NATO AMBASSADORS IN VIENNA MET INFORMALLY WITH  
WARSAW PACT DELEGATES THIS WEEK TO ASK DOZENS OF QUESTIONS  
ON THE NEW COMMUNIST PLAN, STATED NATO CIRCLES.

CONSEQUENTLY ONE CAN NOW MORE CLEARLY DISCERN THE OBJECTIVE AND DETAILS OF THE PACT INITIATIVE, WHICH MAINLY CONSTITUTES A COUNTER-PROPOSAL TO THE LAST NATO MBFR INITIATIVE.

TO COMPLETE THE INFORMATION WHICH "ATLANTIC NEWS" PUBLISHED IN ITS LAST ISSUE, HERE IS THE TWO-PHASE REDUCTION PLAN AS SEEN BY PACT COUNTRIES.

IN THEIR NEW PLAN, THE LATTER STATE THAT THEIR FINAL TARGET IS TO REDUCE THEIR OWN FORCES BY 105,000 MEN FOR GROUND FORCES, AND NATO FORCES BY 91,000 FOR GROUND FORCES, BY THE END OF THE SECOND MBFR REDUCTIONS PHASE. THESE REDUCTIONS, ACCORDING TO THE EAST'S CALCULATION METHOD, WILL ENABLE THE TWO MILITARY ALLIANCES TO EACH ESTABLISH A CEILING OF 700,000 MEN IN GROUND FORCES IN THE REDUCTION AREA IN CENTRAL EUROPE.

ACCORDING TO THE COMMUNIST PLAN, THESE REDUCTIONS WILL TAKE PLACE AS FOLLOWS:

--FIRST PHASE: IN THIS PHASE, WHICH SHOULD BE CONCLUDED IN ABOUT A YEAR'S TIME, ACCORDING TO PACT COUNTRIES, ONLY THE SOVIET UNION AND THE UNITED STATES WILL MAKE REDUCTIONS, BUT ON CONDITION THAT ALL THE OTHER DIRECT PARTICIPANTS UNDERTAKE TO MAKE REDUCTIONS IN THE SECOND PHASE.

THE COMMUNIST PLAN IN THIS CONNECTION PRECISELY PROPOSES  
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PAGE 03 USNATO 06144 01 OF 03 161611Z

THAT THE USSR WITHDRAW 30,000 GROUND FORCES, 1,000 ASSAULT TANKS AND 250 ARMoured VEHICLES (PERSONNEL CARRIERS) FROM THE REDUCTION AREA, I.E., TWO ARMoured DIVISIONS. WITHOUT HOWEVER NAMING THE EAST EUROPEAN COUNTRIES FROM WHICH THESE SOVIET FORCES WILL BE WITHDRAWN, THE SOVIETS HAVE NEVERTHELESS SPECIFIED THE TYPE OF UNITS WHICH WILL TAKE PART IN THIS INITIAL WITHDRAWAL.

IN EXCHANGE FOR THIS SOVIET REDUCTION, THE WARSAW PACT DEMANDS THAT THE UNITED STATES WITHDRAW 14,000 MEN FROM GROUND FORCES AND 1,000 NUCLEAR WARHEADS AND THEIR LAUNCHING SYSTEMS AS THE LAST NATO INITIATIVE PROPOSED.

THIS PART OF THE SOVIET REPLY ESSENTIALLY AMOUNTS TO DENATURING NATO'S NUCLEAR OFFER. THE ALLIED COUNTRIES HAD OFFERED TO WITHDRAW 1,000 NUCLEAR WARHEADS, 54 "F-4" PLANES WITH NUCLEAR CAPACITY AND 36 "PERSHING-1" MEDIUM-RANGE MISSILES AND 29,000 MEN FROM AMERICAN GROUND FORCES IN EXCHANGE FOR A SOVIET TANK ARMY, OR ITS EQUIVALENT, I.E., 68,000 MEN AND 1,700 ASSAULT TANKS. IT IS DOUBTFUL THAT NATO WILL BE PREPARED TO WITHDRAW THE 1,000 NUCLEAR WARHEADS FOR A LOWER NUMBER OF SOVIET TANK ARMY FORCES.

--SECOND PHASE: ACCORDING TO THE COMMUNIST IDEA, THIS PHASE SHOULD BE CONCLUDED TWO OR THREE YEARS AFTER THE CONCLUSION OF A FIRST-PHASE REDUCTION AGREEMENT.

IN ADDITION, PACT COUNTRIES INSIST ON ALL NATO COUNTRIES TAKING PART INDIVIDUALLY IN THIS PHASE'S REDUCTIONS. THE COMMUNIST PLAN ALSO IN GENERAL DESCRIBES THEIR EXPECTATIONS IN THIS CONNECTION, IN ORDER TO ENSURE THAT THE BUNDESWEHR IS ONE OF THE PRINCIPAL NATO COUNTRIES TO MAKE MAJOR REDUCTIONS. AS REGARDS THE SIZE OF THE REDUCTIONS, DIRECT

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PAGE 01 USNATO 06144 02 OF 03 161618Z  
ACTION ACDA-12

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 ACDE-00 CIAE-00 H-02 INR-10  
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UNCLAS SECTION 02 OF 03 USNATO 06144

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PARTICIPANTS SHOULD WITHDRAW 77,000 MEN IN RESPECT OF NATO COUNTRIES (I.E., THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN 91,000 AND 14,000) AND 75,000 FOR EAST EUROPEAN COUNTRIES (THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN 105,000 AND 30,000).

PACT COUNTRIES HAVE ALSO INDICATED THAT THEY ARE EXPECTING MILITARY EQUIPMENT TO BE INCLUDED ON BOTH SIDES IN SECOND-PHASE REDUCTIONS, WHICH GIVES THE IMPRESSION, ACCORDING TO NATO CIRCLES, THAT THE EAST WOULD LIKE NATO TO WITHDRAW MORE TACTICAL NUCLEAR SYSTEMS DURING PHASE TWO.

THE PRECISE MODALITIES FOR THE SECOND PHASE WILL ONLY BE DRAWN UP AFTER THE CONCLUSION OF THE FIRST PHASE, THE

COMMUNIST PLAN ADDS.

NOW THAT WE HAVE THESE ADDITIONAL DETAILS REGARDING THE  
SOVIET OFFER, WE CAN REACH A FEW INITIAL CONCLUSIONS  
REGARDING ITS CONTENT:  
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PAGE 02 USNATO 06144 02 OF 03 161618Z

(1) THERE HAS BEEN PROGRESS ON THE WESTERN CONCEPT OF THE  
MBFR -- THE EAST EUROPEAN COUNTRIES HAVE ACCEPTED THE IDEA  
OF A "COMMON CEILING" (THE 700,000 MEN). HOWEVER, READING  
BETWEEN THE LINES OF THE EASTERN INITIATIVE, ACCORDING TO  
NATO CIRCLES, IT IS OBVIOUS THAT PACT COUNTRIES HAVE NOT  
GIVEN UP THEIR IDEA OF "NATIONAL CEILINGS," WHICH SHOWS  
THAT THEY DO NOT YET ACCEPT THE WESTERN BASIC REQUIREMENT  
OF A "COLLECTIVE CEILING."

(2) FOR THE FIRST TIME, PACT COUNTRIES INDIRECTLY ADMIT  
THAT THERE IS A DISPARITY OF GROUP FORCES IN CENTRAL  
EUROPE, IN THEIR FAVOR, BY ADVOCATING UNEQUAL FORCE  
REDUCTIONS.

(3) WHILE ACCEPTING THE IDEA OF A COMMON CEILING OF 700,000  
MEN ON EACH SIDE IN CENTRAL EUROPE, THE EAST SEEMS TO SUP-  
POSE THAT THE FIGURES WHICH THE TWO ALLIANCES EXCHANGED IN  
1976 ON THEIR MILITARY FORCES IN THE REDUCTION AREA AT  
1 JANUARY 1976 HAD BEEN ACCEPTED AS CORRECT.

IN 1976 NATO HAD STATED THAT ALLIED GROUND FORCES IN THE  
REDUCTION AREA AMOUNTED TO 791,000 MEN (FRENCH FORCES OF  
60,000 IN CENTRAL EUROPE ARE INCLUDED IN THIS FIGURE). A  
FINAL REDUCTION OF 91,000 MEN, AS ADVOCATED BY THE EAST  
FOR NATO FORCES, WOULD IN EFFECT REDUCE ALLIED FORCES TO  
THE DESIRED COMMON CEILING OF 700,000 MEN.

HOWEVER, FRANCE IS NOT TAKING PART IN THE MBFR NEGOTIATIONS  
AND CONSEQUENTLY ITS FORCES COULD NOT BE WITHDRAWN UNDER  
AN MBFR AGREEMENT. HAVING SAID THIS, NATO SHOULD ONLY WITH-  
DRAW 31,000 MEN FROM GROUND FORCES IN ORDER TO REACH THE  
CEILING OF 700,000 MEN.  
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PAGE 03 USNATO 06144 02 OF 03 161618Z

AS FOR THE EAST, THE USSR HAD STATED IN 1976 THAT PACT  
FORCES IN THE REDUCTION AREA AMOUNTED TO 805,000. THUS A  
REDUCTION OF 105,000 MEN, AS ADVOCATED BY THE LATEST PACT

INITIATIVE, WOULD BRING COMMUNIST FORCES TO THE CEILING  
OF 700,000 MEN.

HOWEVER, NATO HAS NEVER ACCEPTED PACT FIGURES. IN 1976 THE  
ALLIANCE ESTIMATED THAT PACT FORCES IN THE AREA IN QUESTION  
AMOUNTED TO 962,000 MEN, WHICH WOULD REQUIRE A REDUCTION  
OF 262,000 GROUND FORCES BY THE EAST IN ORDER TO REACH  
THE 700,000 CEILING, AND NOT ONLY 105,000.

ALTHOUGH THESE FIGURES ON THE AMOUNT OF FORCES IN CENTRAL  
EUROPE CHANGE EVERY YEAR, NATO FEELS THAT AT PRESENT THERE  
IS A DISPARITY OF 140,000 TO 150,000 MEN IN FAVOR OF THE  
EAST IN CENTRAL EUROPE. SUCH A DIFFERENCE IN FORCES WOULD  
MEAN THAT THE PACT MUST STILL REDUCE ITS FORCES BY  
APPROXIMATELY 250,000 IN ORDER TO REACH THE TARGET OF A  
700,000 CEILING ACCORDING TO NATO.

THIS EXPLAINS WHY THE DATA DISCUSSION WHICH IS STILL GOING  
ON IN VIENNA REMAINS THE KING-PIN OF ANY MBFR AGREEMENT.

(4) ALTHOUGH IT SEEMS THAT FOR THE FIRST TIME IN FOUR AND  
A HALF YEARS THERE ARE PROSPECTS OF GENUINE AND CONCRETE  
NEGOTIATION IN VIENNA, DOUBTS ARE EXPRESSED IN NATO  
REGARDING THE POSSIBILITY OF A FIRST-PHASE AGREEMENT'S  
BEING CONCLUDED IN THE COURSE OF THE NEXT TWELVE MONTHS,  
AS THE WARSAW PACT WISHES.

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PAGE 01 USNATO 06144 03 OF 03 161619Z  
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UNCLAS SECTION 03 OF 03 USNATO 06144

USICA

FOR FERNANDEZ FROM CLAUSSEN: STATE FOR ACDA:FISCHER

(5) MOREOVER, IT IS NOT FELT AT NATO THAT THE EAST'S INITIATIVE IS SUFFICIENTLY IMPORTANT (ON ACCOUNT OF DATA PROBLEMS) TO WARRANT AN MBFR MEETING AT FOREIGN MINISTER LEVEL. WE WOULD POINT OUT THAT THE BRITISH PRIME MINISTER RECENTLY PROPOSED THAT AN MBFR SESSION BE HELD AT MINISTERIAL LEVEL TO GIVE POLITICAL IMPETUS TO THE NEGOTIATIONS, BUT ONLY ONCE SUFFICIENT PROGRESS HAD BEEN MADE FOR A FIRST-PHASE AGREEMENT TO BE IN SIGHT.

(6) FINALLY THERE IS THE VERIFICATION QUESTION. THE CONCLUSION OF A FIRST-PHASE AGREEMENT WILL BE USELESS UNLESS THE TWO SIDES HAVE AGREED ON EFFICIENT WAYS OF ENSURING THAT THE AGREED REDUCTIONS HAVE IN FACT TAKEN PLACE. WE WOULD POINT OUT THAT EAST EUROPEAN COUNTRIES ARE FOR THE TIME BEING REJECTING THE IDEA OF AN ON-SITE INSPECTION.

END TEXT. CLAUSSEN

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